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## THE ELECTION OF 1900.

In 1896, Mr. McKinley was elected President of the United States, receiving 61 per cent of the electoral and 51 per cent of the popular votes. In 1900 he received 65 per cent of the electoral and 52 per cent of the popular votes. He thus joins the group of seven Presidents who have been honored with two consecutive terms, Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Jackson, Lincoln and Grant. He enjoys the further distinction of being the only majority President since Grant, all of the others, as well as the two Adamses, Polk, Taylor, Buchanan and Lincoln (in 1860), having received a minority of the popular votes cast. With only one other President, Jackson, McKinley shares the honor of having been returned in the face of a serious challenge of his economic policy. Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe antedated the national convention and the party discipline which has grown up with it; they belonged to a period when the man, not the party, filled the nation's highest office. Moreover, the three Democrats profited by a public sentiment favorable to a second term. Neither Grant nor Lincoln was re-elected on economic issues nor by a free vote of the entire nation. Thus only two Presidents in 112 years have been able to find justification in the popular vote for the belief that the sovereign people, after deliberate thought, had emphatically and unqualifiedly endorsed their administrations.

The result of the election seems to have impressed the public both at home and abroad, not so much because of its meaning, as because of its magnitude. The Democratic party received only thirteen electoral votes outside of the Solid South—and these from states whose fidelity to silver was purely mercenary. Even the sub-arid West, the progenitor of Populism, repudiated its offspring, and gave its entire

electoral vote to McKinley. The plurality in the popular votes was enormous and unprecedented in history. The press, domestic and foreign, has dwelt at length upon the ominous number, 886,000, and calls the defeat a Waterloo, or a landslide. When editorial writers turn from magnitude to meaning, they find their vision and their judgment unable to examine the result in other than superlative terms. They see "65 per cent of the electoral vote," or "a popular plurality of 886,000," and render the verdict, "this magnificent victory sounds the death knell of Bryanism, Demagogism, Populism and Repudiation."<sup>1</sup>

We have lived through this "campaign of education" and have attempted to follow carefully every move. Yet so bewildering is the panorama presented, that it already seems to us like a tale from the "Arabian Nights," or an evening spent with the magician Kellar. With our eyes constantly riveted on the object and the performer, we failed to detect the time when the bird cage was substituted for the bonnet, or the hand which drew many-colored ribbons, eggs and candies from the empty bottle. We agreed before election day that there was a paramount issue. With our eyes and hearts fixed on Prosperity and with our ballots marked Prosperity, we voted for the Prosperity candidate. When our ballot is withdrawn we discover that on it is written, not alone Prosperity, but "the unqualified endorsement of Republicanism as expressed in the policies and achievements of the administration." Underneath Prosperity we are said to have written Ship Subsidy Bill, Permanent Increase in the Army, the Porto Rican Tariff, the Philippine Policy,

<sup>1</sup> It has not been thought desirable to give references for the numerous quotations which follow. They have been taken from some 600 editorials which appeared immediately after election, and represent every section of the country. This study was outlined and prepared with the assistance of the Senior Arts Class in Practical Politics in the University of Pennsylvania. From October 1 to November 8 two partisan dailies were studied by each member. The results are to be found in the University Library in the form of a card classification of clippings, together with a classified album of some 1,500 cartoons, collected by the classes in Practical Politics.

the Dingley Tariff, the Gold Standard, and Government by Injunction.

In the following study of the election seven different aspects of the struggle and its result are considered:

1. The electoral and popular votes returned are presented and analyzed.<sup>1</sup>

2. The interpretation given to the Republican victory by the Republican press is reviewed.

3. Certain misconceptions in regard to the origin and present force of Bryanism and Populism are brought to light.

4. Post-election explanations are contrasted with pre-election claims.

5. Proof is submitted that prosperity, and not expansion, was the issue on which the election turned.

6. The party organizations which carried on the campaign are contrasted, and,

7. Conclusions in regard to the workings of popular government are deduced.

McKinley's election is called a Republican landslide, just as Cleveland's election in 1892 was called a Democratic landslide. Since Cleveland received a minority of the total popular votes, the term landslide must be based upon a considerable margin in the electoral college. By a natural process of the mind, the electoral vote, being determined by the majority of popular votes in doubtful states, comes to be taken as the expression of the popular will. The electoral margin is given as the popular margin. Nine hundred and ninety out of every thousand people probably believe to-day that McKinley received the endorsement of an overwhelming majority of the voters of the country. As a matter of fact only 52 per cent of the voters declared for him, while only 54 per cent of the voters in the two dominant parties gave him their support. That this 2 per cent majority or 4 per cent plurality is deemed a "popular landslide" throws much light on the psychology of an election.

<sup>1</sup> Based upon statement of *Philadelphia Press*, November 30.

Again, by a similar confusion of thought, the "landslide" notion is applied to all sections of the country. It is forgotten that in the four Middle Atlantic States the McKinley vote decreased 8,000, while the Bryan vote increased 151,000. It is forgotten, moreover, that in those doubtful states where campaign funds are always most liberally expended, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and West Virginia, the winning party's net loss since 1896 was 207,000. These states, whose economic wishes may dominate national legislation, cast 131 electoral votes. The states which show an increase for McKinley cast altogether 174 votes, while the states won over this year, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, South Dakota, Utah, and Washington, cast only 31. Significant is it that of the total gain of 246,000 votes, over 119,000 were found in the above states which cast only 31 electoral votes, while 115,000 more were found in the four silver states which voted for Bryan. The two Pacific states, Oregon and California, with their 13 electoral votes added 29,000. Thus 263,000 votes were given by states whose aggregate electoral vote is only 44, against a loss of 207,000 in the eight ever-doubtful states, whose electoral vote is 131. These facts may well make the thoughtful student pause before subscribing to the view that there was in any real sense a "Republican landslide."

As to the meaning of the result there is an astonishing unanimity of opinion on the part of the Republican press, from the *Augusta Journal* to the *Tacoma News*. It is here that the magic of party politics manifests itself most clearly, as before the eyes of the bewildered public the party magician of the quill reads the story of the ballots. For the most part the editorials discuss the negations represented by the large popular majority.

Some of these opinions were as follows: Bryan is "dead and buried beyond hope of resurrection." He was a "Janus-faced trickster," a "quack nostrum doctor," a "magician," a "fake prophet," a "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,"

a "lightning-rod man," a "safe-breaker," a "court jester," an "anarchist," an "artful dodger," a "Divvicrat" and a "brazen footman to the rapacious Tammany Tiger." He was a "blatant demagogue," a "constitutional pessimist," a "traitor," an "apostle of sedition and class hatred," an "unscrupulous expounder of emotional popocratic politics," "*un homme capable de tout.*"<sup>1</sup> The nation has "buried him under an avalanche of votes."

Bryanism, too, is "stamped out;" "its end has come;" "it stands condemned before the world with none so low as to do it reverence." "All that the Democratic party, under the leadership of Mr. Bryan, has contended for, has been repudiated." The election marks the "deliverance from the combination of all the political lunacies of the past." Not only is "free silver confined to the limbo reserved for the children of a diseased imagination," but we have left behind "the whole congeries of fads and follies and hatreds that greedy and unscrupulous men have gathered together in a modern Cave of Adullam for menace to ordered popular government." Bryanism was assisted by agencies "conceived in folly and born of desperation," and by "alliances with all the political ragtag and bobtail that could be enticed into camp by a surrender of Democratic principles." It rested on "the mire of Populism and Socialism" and "sat in the darkness of pessimism."<sup>2</sup> It drew votes from a "conglomeration of wild theorists, of discontented ignorance, of dishonest debtors, of selfish silver owners, of self-seeking politicians, of objectors to law, order and the sanctity of the supreme judiciary, following the Jack o'Lantern light of a man void of understanding."<sup>3</sup>

It matters little to the future of America whether or not the above characterizations of Mr. Bryan express the judgment of the majority of the present generation. It would be of no great consequence if future historians should hold to

<sup>1</sup> *Le Siecle*, November 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Scimitar*, Memphis, Tenn., November 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Town Topics*, New York, November 15.

contrary opinions and go so far as to characterize him, in the language of his followers, as a "patriot," a "second Lincoln," "an able, earnest, conscientious champion of the people," and even as "the greatest American commoner of his generation." He is but one man living in remote Nebraska. A mistake in diagnosing his case will endanger no class, no industry and no principle. The proper and scientific diagnosis of *Bryanism* is, however, of the utmost importance. That disease is not limited to one state nor section. Its ravages were so extensive as to affect 6,415,387 voters, two millions of whom are still at large in the eight doubtful states above mentioned. Even in the five states which gave Mr. McKinley landslides, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin, *Bryanism* polled 1,300,000 votes, while in Ohio itself 475,000 confessed contagion. Did the final result rob this contagion of its baneful power? The post-election physicians answer with an emphatic affirmative.

Their diagnosis does not, however, convince nor reassure the student of American politics. It seems to be based upon an exaggerated estimate of electoral margins. There are several evidences that it was pronounced without an understanding of the true nature of *Bryanism*, its historic antecedents and causes, or its present potential force. There is the same proof that *Bryanism* is buried forever, as of the extinction of Populism. If Populism is a disease of the imagination, it was never so virulent as to-day, when there is less reason for its separate existence. The dreams of to-day become the realities of to-morrow. Populism has inoculated both the Democratic and Republican parties. The latter advocates government ownership and control of an Isthmian Canal; national reservoirs to reclaim 70,000,000 arid acres for free homes; the restriction of immigration; raising the age limit for child-labor, and an effective system of labor insurance.<sup>1</sup> Republicans in state and local politics are con-

<sup>1</sup> Platform, 1900.

stantly encroaching upon the domain of private enterprise, until recently held sacred. The most advanced primary legislation on our statute books was passed by a Republican legislature and a Democratic governor.<sup>1</sup> Likewise the Democratic party has shown populist tendencies. But because the party of opposition, of discontent and of the masses, it has naturally accepted more of the populist creed than the party in power, the party of capital and conservatism. Populism is very much alive in all parties of the day.

Bryanism and Populism are not dead excrescences, but living parts of a great organism, the results of living causes and they are bound to continue active until these causes are removed. They are based upon a condition of fact, not an unrelated state of mind. They result from the inequalities of distribution which no one denies. They are akin to all those historic movements and creeds of the world's democracies, which have had as their object the equalizing of opportunity and privilege, or the minimizing of monopoly advantage. They revert in direct lineage to the Cleveland-Jackson-Jeffersonian Democracy, which the papers and journals of our time are wont to eulogize. It is not creditable to American journalism that historical inaccuracies with reference to the conservatism and dignity of the Jefferson-Jackson or even the Cleveland Democracy have gone practically unchallenged.

To ascribe to Bryan the invention of "class politics" is to forget the traditions in which the Democracy glories. Jefferson, author of the Kentucky Resolutions of 1798, had no more reverence for the national judiciary, the Treasury squadron, nor the "stiff-necked aristocrats" from Boston, than has Bryan, opponent of Government by Injunction, for the judiciary of his day, the present treasury administration or for the "plutocrats of Wall Street."

Monroe<sup>2</sup> urged upon Congress to prevent the monopoly

<sup>1</sup> Minnesota, 1900. See ANNALS, November, 1900, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> Messages, II, 17.



of public lands by the capitalist class. Jackson was considered by the conservatives of his time a most violent demagogue, and, with Jefferson, gloried in the charge that he was attempting to array the masses against the classes. Cleveland, Mugwump as he was, the arch Democrat of the old school according to the current press, proclaimed himself the lineal descendant from those great fathers who battled for the masses against special privilege. He went further and declared that under the rule of the protected classes, there "is not equality before the law."<sup>1</sup>

When Democracy becomes conservative it will have outlived its usefulness and have repudiated its name. That it cannot endure as a conservative party, our history gives ample proof. It is this failure to accept the dictum of experience, which makes possible the extravagant verdict that radicalism in politics is forever abolished. It is not Democracy that has changed but Conservatism. The dreams of Jefferson's time have become the conventions of McKinley's generation.

If the causes which generated Bryanism and Populism and Prohibition and Socialism and Anti-Imperialism were not removed by the landslide of last November, then 48 per cent of the voters are still fundamentally and openly opposed to what has gone by the name of McKinleyism. Wise statesmanship will consider this numerically large opposition in determining legislative and administrative policies. The manifest duty of the party in power is, first, to hold what support it now has, and, secondly, to minimize the opposition. Neither can be done by branding opponents as Demagogues, Populists, Bryanites or Antis. For when opponents become numerous enough, opposition becomes respectable.

The interpretation put upon the positive wishes of the 52 per cent majority does not seem to be less extravagant than the view taken of the future of the 48 per cent

<sup>1</sup> Messages, VIII, 775.

minority. Mr. McKinley himself warned his party that the desire to avert evil may be quite as powerful a motive as that to obtain good. The party press, as well as the foreign conservative press, have found in the "avalanche of votes under which Bryanism was buried" both desires working with superlative force. The victory is characterized as a splendid triumph "for the McKinley administration and everything it stood for." Which being interpreted means "a triumph for gold;" "a victory for an unpartisan judiciary;" "universal support of the doctrine of protection." "We do not wish to be a hermit nation;" we have "upheld the foreign policy in a way that cannot be misunderstood;" we have declared "in favor of the expansion of the American nation to include territory other than that on the North American continent;" we "recognize the manifest destiny of this nation to be one of the greatest of modern world powers, and assert that that which is called Imperialism is but the indication of a healthy growth, properly termed expansion." These general explanatory phrases have since been translated into headings for legislative bills and upon them is based the conclusion: The American people demanded on November 6, by the largest vote ever given any executive, a ship subsidy bill; a permanent increase of the army; a continuance of the gold standard: the Dingley tariff, and the Republican trust policy; the continued interference of the judiciary in strike difficulties, and protective barriers between the United States and her colonial dependencies. "The people have decided, after deliberation, that it is not desirable that the Constitution follow the flag." These claims are certainly not based upon an analysis of the factors which co-operated in Mr. McKinley's re-election.

Prosperity (= a), protection (= b), the gold standard (= c), the party's trust policy (= d), and the colonial policy (=e), combined to attract 52 per cent of the votes. The first factor may, for reasons beyond the control of the

Republican party, hide its alluring face before the next election. Then it will be important to have a majority who love the party's principles, and trust its methods in adversity as in prosperity. The problem may be presented in a mathematical form:  $a + b + c + d + e = 52$  per cent of the votes, *i. e.*,  $a + b + c + d + e > a' + b' + c' + d' + e'$ . It does not follow that  $b > b'$ ,  $c > c'$ ,  $d > d'$  or  $e > e'$ . Nor does it follow even that  $b + c + d + e > b' + c' + d' + e'$ . It may be that  $b + c + d + e < b' + c' + d' + e'$ . In this case the elimination of  $a$  as a factor would leave the Republican party with a minority. Neither the party press nor the outline of proposed Congressional legislation gives evidence that the algebraic problem has been studied and solved by those most vitally interested. Instead, the party mathematicians argue,  $a + b + c + d + e > a' + b' + c' + d' + e'$ . . . .  $a > a'$ ,  $b > b'$ ,  $c > c'$ ,  $d > d'$  and  $e > e'$ . *Q. E. D.*

The President has not only asserted that a logical and scientific analysis of the returns is indispensable to the proper execution of the popular will, but he has himself publicly presented such an analysis.<sup>1</sup> In the following order he has named the factors which co-operated to give him a 2 per cent majority of the popular vote: (1) "Our splendid party." (2) "The Gold Democrats." (3) "The Silver Republicans." (4) "The almost unbroken column of mechanics and agricultural laborers." (5) "The home influence." (6) "The business interests." If the co-operation of all these factors was necessary to its success, then the party in power may not, without jeopardizing its future prospects, do anything which any one of these factors disapproves, unless by so doing compensating accessions are obtained from the opposition.

The votes of the party organization were cast for whatever happened to go by the name of Republicanism. Under adverse circumstances in 1892, 43 per cent of the voters

<sup>1</sup> November 24, 1900, before the Union League, Philadelphia.

were steadfast in support of Republicanism ; in 1888 and 1884 the party polled 47.7 and 48.5, of the votes. The party in 1900, therefore, probably received from 3.5 to 9 per cent of the total vote cast from the five independent factors enumerated by the President. On what issues did the regular traditional party organization receive the votes of these outsiders? To an onlooker this does not seem to be a very difficult question to answer. The negations of certain of the factors are so well known that we can readily determine several issues on which these factors did *not unite* with the Republican party. For instance, "the Gold Democrats" did not approve the Dingley Tariff, the ship subsidy bill, the Porto Rican tariff, nor the theory that the constitution is not coextensive with executive authority. "The Silver Republicans" distrusted monometallism. The mechanics and laborers did not form "an unbroken column" in support of Government by Injunction, the administration trust policy, nor the colonization of the Philippines. "The Home," to a great extent, disapproved the army canteen, the trust policy and the Porto Rican tariff. "Business Interests" did not universally endorse the Republican trust policy. To not one single positive proposition of the dominant party did these five contributaries give unqualified endorsement. To nearly every such proposition some one of these factors stands irrevocably and traditionally opposed. Yet they all united in support of McKinley. By a process of elimination, as well as by reference to pre-election pledges, it appears evident that these factors voted for a set of conditions, not a set of theories. They voted for *Prosperity* and against change.

At the opening of the campaign Prosperity was a universally recognized condition, not an issue. The people had taken the Republican party at its word and believed that the promise had been fulfilled to make gold the standard of value.<sup>1</sup> They knew, furthermore, that the silver

<sup>1</sup> Platform, 1900.

plank at Kansas City was a concession to consistency, a ruse to forestall carping criticism of the inevitable candidate. The protective tariff was not an issue, having received at Kansas City only three lines. In the minds neither of laymen, business men nor laborers did Prosperity seem to be in jeopardy because of a prospective attempt to debate our future relations to the Philippines.

The people were undoubtedly prepared to make Expansion the paramount issue, for they were still imbued with the notion that momentous national decisions are made only after honest debate and deliberate judgment.

The Philadelphia convention did not dispel the expectation that Expansion would be the paramount issue. The administration press could not withhold expressions of dissatisfaction that the platform was cut and dried, and made such meagre mention of the all-important questions forced upon us by the Spanish War. The hoisting of the flag of the Gold Standard and Prosperity was understood to be pure stratagem and an attempt to force the opposition to a defensive campaign.

At the time the Kansas City convention met, the following discontented elements were ready to vote and work against McKinley's endorsement: the Populist-Democratic party, which polled 6,300,000 votes in 1896; the Populist party, which polled 246,000 votes in 1896; the Prohibitionists, who polled 145,000 in 1896 and 262,000 in 1892; the two Socialist parties, who had cast 100,000 votes in the gubernatorial contests of 1898 and 1899; the Gold Democrats, who in 1896 had cast 134,000 independent votes. In addition there was within as well as without the party vigorous and bitter opposition to the canteen, to the civil service record of McKinley, to the *laissez faire* trust policy, and to the so-called capitalistic tendencies of the party, and finally a very general opposition to the Porto Rican tariff and the Philippine policy. Against the administration were arrayed on some one of these counts such men as Boutwell, Harrison, Cleveland, Reed, Harmon,

Wellington, Godkin, Schurz, Hoar, Hale, Heatwole, and Presidents Eliot, Hadley, Rogers, etc., and such influential organs as the *Chicago Times-Herald*, the *Boston Herald*, the *Philadelphia Ledger* and the *Springfield Republican*.

The Kansas City convention named as paramount the one issue on which all of these opposition elements were united. Bryan's Indianapolis speech appeared to cement the union. Briefly he called attention to those inconsistencies and mistakes of the Republican party which the opposition elements in turn condemned. He appealed to the consciences of Americans and pleaded for a people which was fighting now, as we in 1776 fought, for independence. He invoked the noble traditions of our nation; he appealed to our sense of fairness; he quoted from the fathers of the Republican party the declaration which awakes a sympathetic response—"Self-government is the natural government of man." He held up to view as our destiny "a republic applying in practice and proclaiming to the world the self-evident truth . . . that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." His speech was accepted with enthusiasm as designating in masterly manner the paramount issue of the campaign.

But the supremacy of "Expansion" was brief. "Prosperity" soon took its place. The procedure by which the substitution was made is most instructive. First, the fact of Prosperity was demonstrated and elaborated; secondly, the fact of apathy as to the fate of Prosperity was shown; thirdly, the danger to Prosperity was shouted; fourthly, the paramountcy of Prosperity was proved; and finally the dependence of Prosperity upon the return of McKinley was established.

The first step was easy. So general was Prosperity and so strikingly obvious, that the administration propaganda from convention to election day, in the platform, on the stump, and through the pamphlet and official statistical publications was successfully carried on in the language of superla-

tives. Trade, imports, exports, balances, money supply, manufactures, population, safety deposits, insurance, mortgages discharged, capital ready to invest, coal and iron production, prices and wages—everything was the *biggest* it had ever been.

Nor was it difficult to prove that there was universal apathy. The Republican party could tell from the campaign contributions; it could prove it further by a long list of statesmen, scholars, business men and labor leaders who were hesitating whether to give the party a half-hearted support or whole-hearted opposition. This apathy was not as to the fate of the Philippines, the Porto Rican tariff, the theory that the constitution follows the flag or the future of American ideals. It was apathy as to the fate of Prosperity. The Republican press proved what everybody knew that in July the people were not afraid that Prosperity was jeopardized by the paramountcy of Expansion.

The fact that Prosperity was in imminent danger was next established. It was pointed out between June and September<sup>1</sup> that the commission to the Republican party to make<sup>2</sup> "every American dollar a gold dollar or its equivalent" had been only partially executed. A Democratic executive could undo the work of the administration. Bryan would certainly take advantage of the omission or oversight or failure of the Gold Standard act of March, 1900. Whereas the menace in 1896 was only to a prospective prosperity, the menace in 1900 was to a universally existent prosperity.

So vividly was the danger presented that the Republican National Committee alone was able to collect over \$5,000,000 to teach the public that the election of Bryan would shatter Prosperity. So earnestly was this taught that many large

<sup>1</sup> Secretary Gage, July 12: "I am satisfied that the new law establishes the gold standard beyond assault, unless it is deliberately violated." Compare with statements of August 25, and the succeeding debate with Mr. Schurz.—Daily papers, September 13.

<sup>2</sup> Platform.

manufacturing establishments gave notice to their employees that operations would be suspended the morning after Bryan's election. Contracts were made conditional upon the rejection of the candidate of the "forces of chaotic evil"<sup>1</sup> at the polls. So universal was the opposition that Democratic orators and journals were compelled to assume the defensive on the paramount proposition of their opponents.

The paramountcy of Prosperity was never in question after Bryan and his party turned from the issue on which they could unite all of the opposition elements, to debate the issues on which the administration was strongest. As was to be expected, there was defection in the opposition ranks and a cementing of the various discontented elements with the party of Prosperity. It is not improbable that the Democratic party lost votes with every speech made after the Indianapolis meeting. Certain it is that Expansion or Imperialism degenerated from a paramount issue involving the future of our political ideals, to a subsidiary theme in a chorus of captious criticisms upon the party in power. At Indianapolis, Bryanism scorned to discuss the dollar. In Madison Square, Bryanism in affiliation with Crokerism, discussed the dollar as at Washington Park economic questions began and closed an hour's talk. On questions of dollars and cents Democracy should have known that people welcome economic experiments, not when on the flood tide of prosperity, but rather when business conditions invite to change.<sup>2</sup>

It was not Bryan, it was not Bryanism, nor was it any gross materialism of the American people which, at this time of momentous crisis, shifted the issue from Expansion to Prosperity. All the conditions were present so far as the people were concerned, to justify and compel a free and full

<sup>1</sup> Governor Roosevelt, St. Paul Speech.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. F. A. Cleveland, of the University of Pennsylvania, has worked out an interesting diagram in which is shown the remarkable coincidence since 1820 of business depressions and administration reverses, and business buoyancy and administration successes in the United States.



discussion of the desirability of an Asiatic colonial policy. This discussion was averted, perhaps for all time, perhaps only temporarily, by the operation of the machinery of party organization, which in the interest of party, took from the American people the opportunity to decide its future attitude toward colonization in general, and toward the Philippine Islands in particular.

Two organizations, two armies of rival politicians, were struggling for the privilege of naming the paramount issue. Just as in war, the probabilities of success lay with the best equipped, and best organized. In equipment and organization the Republican party was in every respect superior. Within the party there was unanimity of thought and action; all endorsed without qualification the stratagem of the leaders as expressed in the Philadelphia platform. Within the Democratic ranks there were schisms and jealousies, chronic objectors and "traitors." The stratagem of the leaders at Kansas City was at the outset discredited by the debate over the silver plank. It was an aggregation of elements differing in party traditions, and holding in common only the belief that Expansion or Imperialism must be made the paramount issue.

The Republican party represented the moneyed interests of the country. The fear of an unsettling of the currency, and of injury to large corporations from Bryan's proposed anti-trust legislation, brought out liberal contributions to its campaign fund, giving the Republican National Committee plenty of ready money for all legitimate means of advancing its cause—such as paying traveling expenses of speakers, printing and circulating campaign literature, and making preliminary polls, not to mention the passes supplied by railroad corporations for sending home to vote men living in closely contested states.

The Democratic party, on the other hand, represented the interests of the "middle and lower" classes, and was compelled to seek its campaign contributions from these poorer

constituents, and the few moneyed interests which expected to gain from a Democratic victory. The piteously meagre fund resulting was a severe handicap which the Democratic party struggled in vain to overcome. While the Republican party was well supplied with speakers of note, and was able to send out all it considered advisable, the Democratic party was unable to send out all the speakers at its command. It is estimated that toward the end of the campaign, there were 7,000 Republican speeches made each week day, while the Democratic figure never attained the meagre number of 2,500. Nor could the Democratic managers supply transportation to enable citizens to return to their legal residences to vote. There was no general exodus of Democratic voters from the colleges and universities. Instead, Democratic student voters received letters similar to the following:

"We are very hard up this year and are depending largely upon the loyalty and enthusiasm of those who believe in justice and liberty to carry this campaign. The prospects in —— for a Democratic victory never looked brighter than they do at the present time, and I believe that if every Democrat does his duty that —— will cast her electoral vote for Bryan on the sixth of November. I know it is hard to ask a man to come such a distance to vote, but we must all make some sacrifices for the principles which we love and advocate, and I hope that something will occur whereby you can see your way clear to return home and cast your vote for Bryan." <sup>1</sup>

The avenues for the transportation of facts and arguments and sneers and jokes and prejudices and canards were likewise opened more freely to the Republican party than to the opposition. The extent of the Republican domination over the press is not generally known, nor is its influence appreciated. In states like Pennsylvania there is little opportunity for the average reader to hear more than one side of great political discussions. In Philadelphia, out of forty-two dailies and weeklies, not one declared itself in the newspaper directory of this year to be Democratic, while

<sup>1</sup> From a National Democratic Committeeman in answer to a request for transportation by a student at the University of Pennsylvania.

twenty-nine were at the outset avowedly Republican. Of thirteen Independent organs two dailies, with a circulation of less than 200,000, had Democratic sympathies. One opposed Bryan's election throughout, while the other supported him on part of his economic program, thus helping to make paramount the issue on which Bryan must have been beaten. Even this support diminished in enthusiasm immediately prior to election day. Nor was there equality of equipment in the pivotal states such as New York and Indiana. The relative control over the press, in these states, is indicated in the following table:

	Daily.		Weekly.		Daily and Weekly.		
	N. Y.	Indiana.	N. Y.	Indiana.	N. Y.	Indiana.	Total.
Republican . . .	57	54	241	164	298	218	516
Democratic . . .	37	48	157	144	194	192	386
Independent . . .	41	25	262	137	303	162	465
Non-partisan . . .	22	16	210	127	232	143	375

This shows that of 902 avowedly Republican and Democratic papers, over 57 per cent had been consistently preaching Republicanism prior to the campaign. At the moment the campaign opened the administration party was in control of 33 per cent more dailies and weeklies in the ten doubtful states than the Democratic organization. In addition to their advantage of a greater circulation of papers already controlled, the Republican party had greater ability to purchase such independent and non-partisan assistance as was in the market. Furthermore it was in a position to exert greater indirect influence upon papers which would not barter their support for a consideration, but which because of their constituencies, could not help leaning rather to the conservative than to the radical side on economic issues.

It is unnecessary to describe the thousand and one artifices employed by both parties to influence the popular vote. Allowing for the difference in their capabilities and resources, they were equally spectacular, illogical, petty, vain-glorious and bombastic. In debate each was at a disadvantage on

the other's ground. The Republican party was able because of its superior organization and greater resources to suggest its own subject for debate, and maintained throughout Prosperity as the paramount issue. On that issue the election was won.

The same perfectly disciplined organization which determined the paramount issue is now, through its press and its leaders in Congress, determining the paramount result. No mention has yet been made in Congress of a "currency law which shall establish the gold standard beyond assault, unless it is deliberately violated." Instead, Congress is busying itself with the Ship Subsidy, the Nicaraguan Canal, the Army and Navy Reorganization appropriations and a reduction in the war taxes. Expansion is the paramount result of the election and the paramount object of legislation. Yet, as shown above, the American people have never debated on its merits the proposition to which they have indirectly committed themselves.

This fact is more than an interesting commentary on our system of government by parties. It indicates a loose and insincere method of reasoning which repudiates the lessons of experience. It shows that a paramount issue need not guide the legislator or the executive after it has guided the voter. The full force of the danger of such reasoning is more vividly presented, if we apply the same hiatus between pre-election and post-election intentions to the supposititious case of Bryan's election. It would follow that Bryan's election would have meant the unqualified endorsement of the demands and protests contained in the Chicago and Kansas City platforms. A similar type of reasoning construes the recent British Tory landslide to have meant an unqualified endorsement of the church and land doles; an acquiescence in the Tory failure to fulfill its pledges with reference to old age pensions and other social legislation; and an overwhelming vote of confidence in the war department. Thus it would never be possible to rebuke

an administration by an adverse vote, without commissioning the opposition to undertake each and every one of the sweeping and radical reforms to whose ultimate accomplishment different elements of the opposition are pledged.

The recent election clearly reveals the real nature of popular government under parties. It does more: it dispels many hallucinations cherished by the younger generation as to the manner in which society progresses and erects landmarks. We have been wont to envy our fathers and grandfathers, who lived in the epoch-making periods of our nation's development. We have lived again their tragedies, have struggled through the conflicts of interest, and braved the torrents of popular passion, class hatred and sectional strife, which, in that ideal past, aroused them to noble thought and inspired deed. We have resented the iconoclastic scholarship which would prove that the Revolution was a struggle for dollars, the Mexican War a war for booty, and the Civil War a contest for industrial supremacy. We have believed that grave crises could have been met only by candid thought and honest acts. The recent election has, however, demonstrated that popular governments under parties may pass great crises without facing them, that questions of permanent and world-wide importance may be decided while answering some infinitely less important questions, or even while refusing to be interrogated.

The ease with which we, as a people, pass from the contemplation of majorities to generalizations in regard to forces ; the exaggerated importance which we attach to the electoral margin ; the difficulty we experience in adjusting post-election interpretation to pre-election purposes ; the depreciation of the causes represented by the losing candidate ; the glorification of the leaders and periods of former struggles of the masses against the classes ; the unanimity with which the press of the victorious party denies the possibility of a majority on a paramount issue without an unqualified endorsement of subsidiary policies ; the hypnotic

influence of the party star chamber which shapes platforms, names candidates, designates paramount issues, dictates jokes, distributes applause, and disseminates patent insides and spontaneity,—these are all evidences that party discipline and party organization are the supreme powers in American politics.

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